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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

Legal experts see strong self-defense claim for Rittenhouse

When Kyle Rittenhouse goes on trial for shooting three men during street protests in Wisconsin that followed a police shooting last summer, he'll argue that he fired in self-defense.

Legal experts say under Wisconsin law he has a strong case. But prosecutors will argue that Rittenhouse created a deadly situation by coming to Kenosha with an AR-style semiautomatic rifle — thereby forfeiting his claim to self-defense.

Rittenhouse, 18, of Antioch, Illinois, faces homicide charges in the Aug. 25, 2020, deaths of Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber, and could face life in prison.

Rittenhouse, then 17, responded to calls on social media to travel to Kenosha bearing weapons to protect the city from damaging protests that followed a white police officer shooting Jacob Blake, a Black man, in the back. (A prosecutor later cleared the officer, ruling that Blake was turning toward the officer with a knife.)

Rittenhouse and all three men he shot are white.

Bystander video shows an unarmed Rosenbaum chasing Rittenhouse when Rittenhouse fires the fatal shots.

Soon after, Rittenhouse is seen running with protesters on his heels. Huber appears to strike him in the head with a skateboard; Rittenhouse shoots him in the heart.

Seconds later, Gaige Grosskreutz steps toward Rittenhouse with a pistol. Rittenhouse shoots him, badly injuring Grosskreutz's arm.

The defense claims self-defense. Rittenhouse's attorneys say he came to Kenosha to protect businesses from damage and looting.

The defense has said Rosenbaum and Huber tried to wrest Rittenhouse's rifle away, leading Rittenhouse to fear he would be shot with his own weapon.

The defense also wants to introduce evidence that police handed water to Rittenhouse and other rifle-carrying citizens, and said, "We appreciate you guys, we really do." They argue that the friendly greeting contributed to Rittenhouse thinking there was nothing wrong with his presence on the streets that night — and that it undermines any argument that he acted recklessly.

Prosecutors will portray him as a wannabe cop who came looking for trouble and fame, and that by bringing a rifle, he was the primary cause of the deadly encounters.

They also argue that Rittenhouse "was the aggressor, there with the intent to violently clash with those opposed to his beliefs."

Wisconsin law allows someone to use deadly force only if "necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm."

Wisconsin law doesn't require someone whose life is in danger to flee before shooting. But jurors can consider whether someone tried to move away from danger as they assess the reasonableness of a self-defense claim.

Wisconsin doesn't have a stand-your-ground law that grants wide-ranging rights for a person to stay put and fend off an attack no matter where it occurs.

Rittenhouse faces a sixth count, possession of a dangerous weapon by a person under 18. Andrew Branca, a Colorado lawyer who wrote the book "The Law of Self Defense: Principles," said whether Rittenhouse was legally carrying the gun or not that

night shouldn't factor into his right to self-defense.

Under self-defense law and precedent, Rittenhouse's motives for being in Kenosha are irrelevant to whether he had a legal right to shoot when threatened, some legal experts say. What matters is what happened in the minutes surrounding the shooting, Branca said.

"Poor judgment is not a crime," said Branca, who thinks Rittenhouse has a strong case for self-defense.

Even if it isn't directly relevant to the self-defense claim, legal experts agreed that the question of why Rittenhouse was in Kenosha will loom over the trial. "Everybody in that courtroom is going to be thinking he deserved what he got because he put himself in a hostile situation. ... 'What are you doing down there with a gun?'" said Paul Bucher, a former Waukesha County district attorney. —AP October 28, 2021A

Ed.: The jury acquitted Rittenhouse of all charges November 19, 2021.

The FBI's Unjustified Targeting of Concerned Women of America

By Patrick G. Eddington

For more than two years, the Cato Institute has been conducting a "citizens investigation" of the FBI and other federal agencies that in the past engaged in domestic surveillance, the most infamous of which was its Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO.)

When COINTELPRO and related domestic spying activities conducted by the FBI, CIA, and NSA were exposed by the Church Committee in 1975, various laws and congressional oversight mechanisms were proposed

to prevent their recurrence. But instead of legislation to explicitly bar the FBI from engaging in politically-tinged surveillance, then-Attorney General Ed Levi promulgated what became known as the Attorney General's Guidelines for Domestic FBI Operations. Sold as a way to prevent COINTELPRO-like activities, the AG Guidelines were a failure almost from the outset.

In 2008, then-AG Michael Mukasey modified the AG Guidelines by creating an entirely new class of FBI proto-investigation known as an "Assessment". Unlike a normal FBI investigation, an Assessment requires no criminal basis to be opened—just a nebulous "authorized purpose." FBI agents conduct physical surveillance of Assessment targets, scour public and classified databases for information on them, and run confidential informants against them.

It's a prescription for abuse. Which brings us to Concerned Women for America (CWA).

Earlier this month in response to a Cato Freedom of Information Act request, the FBI provided a redacted but still very illuminating FBI Washington Field Office (WFO) "Charity Assessment" on CWA conducted in July 2016. The Assessment was opened "to determine the possibility of fraudulent activity." Not "report of fraudulent activity"—just the "possibility."

It was a pure FBI domestic surveillance "fishing expedition", with the agent focused on CWA's alleged "two-star rating from Charity Navigator, as well as searches of other commercial and government databases (all conveniently redacted by the FBI).

Despite alleged "red flags of fraudulent activity" (also redacted), the agent concluded, on the basis of "no derogatory information in the many databases consulted, that opening a full investigation of CWA was not warranted.

At no time was there an allegation of actual fraud or embezzlement—just an FBI agent looking to meet a quota for how many Assessments they had opened during the reporting period. This is exactly what happens when fundamental constitutional standards for obtaining warrants or conducting searches and seizures are ignored, or, in the case of the AG Guidelines, effectively subverted as matter of official policy. — Cato Institute July 14, 2021

Ed.: Based on Cato's findings, on July 20, Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, sent a letter to AG Merrick Garland and FBI director Christopher

Wray, insisting that they provide him with information related to the FBI's "assessment" (investigation) of the conservative nonprofit group, Concerned Women for America.

U.S. judge orders continued pretrial detention for accused Jan. 6 rioter 'King James'

A federal judge on Tuesday ordered continued pretrial detention for James McGrew, 39, a former U.S. Marine facing multiple felony charges related to his allegedly violent conduct, including throwing a pole at police, during the Jan. 6, U.S. Capitol riot.

Beryl Howell, chief U.S. District judge in Washington, said McGrew had violated probation he was serving for an earlier offense by travelling to Washington on Jan. 6 and had an extensive criminal record.

The judge said McGrew, whose abdomen features a large gothic-lettered tattoo labelling him "King James," participated "enthusiastically ... in a violent assault on the Capitol."

"I do find the defendant poses a danger to the community" beyond Jan. 6, Howell said.

Prosecutors claim McGrew cheered as a mob of demonstrators first drove back police defending the Capitol's West Plaza, where he apparently was pepper-sprayed.

Prosecutors said he subsequently entered the U.S. Capitol, encouraging other rioters to enter with him, and then became aggressive when police asked him to leave the Rotunda, where he was pepper-sprayed again.

Prosecutors said that sometime after exiting the Capitol building, McGrew threw a pole at police.

Defense lawyer William Shipley acknowledged that riot video did show that McGrew "took a hold of" a pole and threw it "like a javelin." Shipley complained that his client had already spent six months in pretrial detention.

More than 660 people have been charged with taking part in the attack, an unsuccessful attempt to stop Congress from certifying President Joe Biden's election victory, which former president Donald Trump falsely claimed was the result of widespread fraud.

-- Reuters November 2, 2021

Citizens Petition to Immediately Pass a Constitutional Amendment to Limit Terms for Congress

To: Representative Chris Smith
To Senators Robert Menendez and Cory Booker

As a New Jersey voter, I strongly urge you to co-sponsor and actively support the Constitutional Amendment that would:

1. **Require** U.S. Representatives to leave the House after serving a maximum of three two-year terms.
2. **Require** U.S. Senators to leave the Senate after serving a maximum of two six-year terms.

The President is limited to two terms in office. **TERM LIMITS** should apply to Congress as well. America's founders envisioned a "citizens' legislature," not a permanent ruling class governing America.

In the early days of our Republic, Members of Congress usually spent just a few months in Washington legislating. They were paid **\$6 per day** on days they were actually legislating, then returned home to their full-time jobs as farmers, doctor, lawyers or businessmen.

Today, the standard pay and benefits package for a Member of Congress is more than **\$200,000** per year.

Few would argue that this lavish pay for Congress has attracted quality leaders for America.

Congress today is deeply corrupt – in both parties. American has become a country where people get rich by having political connections and special interest contribute to political campaigns in the hope of gaining special "carve-outs" from the federal government pie.

This is not how American government is supposed to work. Public service is supposed to be public service – not a fast track to getting fabulously wealthy.

The time has come to dismantle the arrogant, corrupt permanent Political Cartel in Washington, DC by limiting terms for Congress.... The Conservative Caucus, P.O. Box 1899, Merrifield, VA 22116

Potential jurors in Rittenhouse trial were asked their opinions on AR-15 rifles, some afraid they'd face threats if chosen to serve

A jury of 11 women and nine men was selected to serve in the Kyle Rittenhouse trial.

The jury is overwhelmingly white, with one person of color among the group of 20. The jury is expected to be whittled down to 12 jurors for final deliberations.

Many of the questions that Rittenhouse's attorney, Corey Chirafisi,

posed to jurors centered on their knowledge of guns and their opinions on semiautomatic weapons.

Many of the prospective jurors said they owned guns or were avid hunters. One woman said she acquired a weapon during the unrest last year in order to protect herself.

Chirafisi also asked whether the potential jurors had strongly held opinions about AR-15s, the style of rifle that Rittenhouse used in the shooting.

AR-15-style rifles are semiautomatic, and there has been debate over whether they should be legal in the US, thanks to their use in mass-shooting events.

One woman was dismissed from the jury when she said that she didn't think anyone should be allowed to own an AR-15. She said her opinion was so strong that it could make her prejudiced against Rittenhouse.

A couple of potential jurors also expressed worries about how deciding the case would affect their lives. "Either way this goes, half the country is upset with you," said one juror. "I don't want people to have my name. I don't want to be seen on TV."

She added that she took someone else's car to the courthouse out of fear that she might later be identified. Another woman said she feared the same thing and had taken a Lyft instead of driving herself to the court. — Insider November 1, 2021

Facebook ban on supporting Rittenhouse wears thin as prosecution stumbles

Facebook decided last September to ban statements defending Kyle Rittenhouse as if they were support for "mass murder" — a decision that looks increasingly questionable as Rittenhouse's lawyers make a strong self-defense case.

Video evidence of the melee at a Black Lives Matter riot in Kenosha last Aug. 25 suggested that he had fired on people who attacked him.

A key prosecution witness admitted Monday that Rittenhouse only shot at him once he had pointed his own pistol at the teenager, and the detective in the case admitted that Rittenhouse only shot people chasing him.

Some legal observers opined that Rittenhouse should qualify for a directed verdict — a legal finding by the judge that the prosecution has failed to establish the basic elements of the crime. But the establishment media continued portraying the teenager in the worst possible light.

Facebook declared — in advance of any trial — that Rittenhouse was guilty of "mass murder," and confirmed that it would ban any posts supporting him.

Other social media companies followed suit, as did other companies and organizations. As Breitbart News recalled: "Twitter locked the account of a Rittenhouse attorney, and a police officer lost his job for donating to Rittenhouse's defense."

-- www.breitbart.com/2021/11/08

NRA loses federal appeal over NY gun store closures

A federal appeals court on Tuesday ruled against the National Rifle Association in the gun rights group's lawsuit challenging New York state's closing of gun stores early in the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a 3-0 vote, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan said the NRA's bid for an injunction was moot because there was "no reasonable prospect" of more closures, after the state legislature curtailed the governor's power to impose COVID-19 restrictions.

The NRA had sued over a March 2020 executive order by then-Governor Andrew Cuomo closing gun stores because they were "non-essential businesses." It said the closures violated the Second Amendment and other constitutional provisions.

A federal judge dismissed the NRA's lawsuit in August 2020, and Cuomo's order was later rescinded.

The NRA is separately defending itself against a lawsuit by NY Attorney General Letitia James seeking its dissolution and the ouster of longtime Chief Executive Wayne LaPierre.

James, a Democrat, has said the NRA is racked by corruption, including by diverting millions of dollars to LaPierre and other insiders.

The NRA has rejected James' claims and called her lawsuit politically motivated. — www.reuters.com November 16, 2021

The Disaster on Our Southern Border

By Mark Morgan

In conclusion, it is simply common sense to view border security as national security. If you make this point today, you risk being called a racist or worse. But it needs to be said over and over until we fight our way back to the point where we have a bipartisan consensus that immigration laws should be enforced. This is not going to be easy. Even as the acting commissioner

of Customs and Border Protection, I had my official government Twitter account blocked prior to the 2020 election for posting a photograph of the border wall and explaining that it is an integral part of effective border security. The powers that be eventually reversed this decision, but it is an indication of what the American people — who overwhelmingly support border security — are up against.

What we need is widespread active public involvement. Illegal immigration, border security, the erosion of the rule of law, and the loss of our nation's sovereignty are interconnected, and should be debated as important issues in local and state politics as well as national. When I was the chief of U.S. Border Patrol in the Obama administration, Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson told us that 1,000 illegal immigrants is a bad day. Today that number is approaching 7,000, and nothing is being done about it. This can't be allowed to continue. A country that cannot control its borders is not a country, and I'm sad to say that we are facing that eventuality.

Mark Morgan is Former Acting Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

-- *Imprimis* August 2021

US Supreme Court to hear major case that could see more guns in public

The supreme court will hear arguments on Wednesday in a gun rights case that could lead to more guns on the streets of New York and California, and affect restrictions on carrying firearms in airports, bars, churches and schools.

The case centers on a New York law that prohibits people from carrying a concealed handgun in public unless they can demonstrate a need to carry the weapon.

The New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, an affiliate of the National Rifle Association, argues that the law is too restrictive. Should the court decide in the gun organization's favor, it could dramatically increase the number of people eligible to carry concealed firearms as they go about their daily lives.

California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island have laws similar to New York's legislation.

In New York, along with the other states, the carrying of concealed guns is restricted to those applying for a concealed-carry licence who can demonstrate "proper cause".

Applicants who obtain a license are either issued an unrestricted license, which gives them broad ability to carry a weapon in public, or a restricted license, allowing them to carry a gun in certain circumstances. Those circumstances include for hunting or target shooting, when traveling for work or when in backcountry areas.

The supreme court last issued major gun rights decisions in 2008 and 2010, verdicts that established a nationwide right to keep a gun at home for self-defense.

Gun violence rose in 2020 from the previous year, as gun purchases also increased. CNN reported that between 1 January and 15 September this year 14,516 people died from gun violence in the US, a 9% increase on 2020.

During the same period there were 498 mass shootings across the US, an average of about 1.92 per day.

-- www.theguardian.com/2021/nov/03

GOA beats Bloomberg in court over Second Amendment sanctuaries

In July Gun Owners of America defeated Bloomberg's Everytown for Gun Safety in court.

The issue involved a Second Amendment Sanctuary Ordinance (SASO) passed by the citizens of Columbia County, Oregon.

Bloomberg's group tried to torpedo the 2A sanctuary movement by challenging a local SASO.

But GOA, joined by the Oregon Firearms Federation, came to the defense of the ordinance. And we are very thankful that the court sided against Everytown and the anti-gun County Board, which decided to appeal the case in August.

Over 60 percent of municipalities in the U.S. have passed 2A sanctuaries. So this case marks a huge victory for not only gun owners in Columbia County, Oregon, but Second Amendment supporters nationwide.

-- The Gun Owners October 23, 2021

Biden Administration Collecting Information on Millions of American Gun Owners

By Eric Lendrum

The Biden Administration has collected records of over 54 million legal gun-owners in the U.S., for the purpose of increased surveillance of such citizens, according to the *Washington Free Beacon*.

Documents obtained by the gun rights advocacy group Gun Owners of America show that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms processed approximately 54.7 million records in fiscal year 2021 from "out-of-business" documents, which consist of all firearms-related transactions made by a particular gun store after the store has gone out of business, at which point those records become property of the ATF.

Gun stores are currently allowed to destroy records that are 20 years old or older; the Biden Administration is pursuing avenues to ensure that such records are made permanent and cannot be destroyed.

"Instead of maintaining the right of [licensed firearm dealers] to destroy Firearm Transaction Records after 20 years," explained Aidan Johnston, GOA's director of federal affairs, "buried within Biden's proposed regulations is a provision that would mean every single Firearm Transaction Record going forward would eventually be sent to ATF's registry in West Virginia."

The greatest fear among gun advocates, including the GOA, is that the Biden Administration may take steps to create a national registry of all firearms owners. An ATF spokesman rejected this idea, claiming that the ATF's "National Tracing Center processes millions of out of business records each month...those out of business records do not constitute an initiation or continuation of any federal gun registry."

The ATF spokesman insisted that "Congress and the Government Accountability Office have an opportunity to review any final rule prior to its effective date. The process is anything but 'speedy.'"

-- amgreatness.com/2021/11/09

Commentary: This is one reason why Virginia Civil Defense League has always opposed gun dealers having to put the make/model/serial number on the Form 4473 when a person is purchasing a gun. If you have passed a background check, it shouldn't matter to the government exactly which gun or guns you then buy.

Review: *Black Eye for America*

By Carol Swain and Chris Schoor

In schools and workplaces across the United States, Americans are being indoctrinated with a divisive, anti-American ideology: **Critical Race Theory (CRT)**. Based in **cultural Marxism**, CRT bullies and demonizes

whites while infantilizing and denying agency to blacks, creating a deep racial rift. As Abraham Lincoln famously observed, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." CRT aims to divide the American nation against itself and burn down the house.

In ***Black Eye for America: How Critical Race Theory Is Burning Down the House***, Carol Swain and Christopher Schorr expose the true nature of Critical Race Theory, and they offer concrete solutions for taking back the country's stolen institutions. They describe CRT in theory and practice, accounting for its origins and **weaponization within American schools and workplaces**; explain how this ideology threatens traditional American values and legal doctrines, including civil rights; and equip everyday Americans with strategies to help them resist and defeat **CRT's pernicious influence**.

Carol Swain (PhD), a former tenured professor at Princeton University, is the author of *Be the People: A Call to Reclaim America's Faith and Promise* and *The New White Nationalism in America: Its Challenge to Integration*.

Christopher Schorr holds a PhD from Georgetown University.

-- Amazon book blurb

Hospital exec awarded \$10 million in discrimination payout after being fired for being white

From *The Daily Mail*, "White male marketing VP at North Carolina hospital wins \$10 million 'reverse discrimination' payout after he was replaced by two women - one of whom is black - as part of diversity and inclusion program":

David Duvall sued Novant Health in North Carolina, where he'd worked for five years as the Senior VP of Marketing and Communications, and was lauded by colleagues and supervisors, in 2018.

He says he was inexplicably terminated just days before reaching his five year work anniversary, a milestone that would have awarded him a higher severance payout than what he was given.

He was replaced by two women - Kate Everett, a white woman and Vicki Free, a black woman.

Duvall's attorneys proposed that he was fired 'out of the clear blue sky' because he was a white man, and that the move was in keeping with the hospital's 'five year plan' to boost diversity by 2020.

He wasn't the only white executive fired; he says the Chief Legal Officer, Medical Group President, Chief Information Officer, Patient Experience Officer and President of Haymarket Medical Center were all replaced either by a black person or a woman in the 12-18 months after him.

The jury agreed and on Tuesday, awarded him \$10 million in a reverse discrimination payout.

More from *The Winston-Salem Journal*: The jury said that Duvall proved that his race and gender were motivating factors in Novant Health's decision to terminate him. The jury also indicated that Novant Health failed to prove that it would have dismissed Duvall regardless of his race.

"We are extremely disappointed with the verdict," said Megan Rivers, a Novant Health spokeswoman. It's important for all current and future team members to know that this verdict will not change Novant Health's steadfast commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity for all."

-- www.informationliberation.com Oct. 27, 2021

Active-duty police in major US cities appear on Oath Keep rosters

Leaked records purportedly from the Oath Keepers, a far-right organization, suggest that its effort to recruit law enforcement officers has found some success in New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago.

Extremism experts say the findings are reason for concern, as the far-right paramilitary organization encourages members to uphold the law only as they interpret it. But defining a clear standard on officers' affiliation with groups such as the Oath Keepers is tricky, as it could run afoul of officers' free speech and free assembly rights.

The Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol dramatically intensified scrutiny of the group.

Founded in 2009 by Stewart Rhodes, a former army paratrooper, the Oath Keepers target law enforcement and military personnel for recruitment. The paramilitary organization claims to defend the Constitution, and reaffirms the oath of service to "support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

Members of the loosely organized network have been a presence at armed standoffs against federal authorities in situations that its members believe constitute government overreach. More recently, Oath Keepers have shown up at racial justice protests

in opposition to Black Lives Matter and far-left Antifa activists. Part of the so-called patriot movement, the group began as an anti-government movement, but refashioned itself as a Pro-Trump extremist group, specifically targeting leftist groups and the supposed deep state.

Federal prosecutors have brought charges against at least 21 people with alleged ties to the group and participated in the Jan. 6 attack. Prosecutors allege that members of the Oath Keepers conspired over the course of weeks and months to bring weapons and armor to the Washington, DC-area ahead of the riot and used military-style tactics to breach the building.

Rhodes has not been accused of entering the Capitol himself, and he has said publicly was unaware of any plan by any Oath Keepers to attack the Capitol.

"Some of our guys got caught up and went inside the Capitol, which I think was a massive mistake, but I don't think there was any conspiracy on their part to do that," Rhodes told the Wichita Times Record News in June.

In September, an anonymous hacker released records purportedly taken from the Oath Keepers web servers, which NPR obtained through the non-profit journalist collective Distributed Denial of Secrets. Included in the leak were some of the group's chat logs, emails and a list of nearly 40,000 entries, seemingly including those currently and formerly on its membership rolls.

Comparing the membership roster to lists of officers in the Chicago Police Department, New York Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, reporters were able to identify active officers.

NPR identified thirteen active members of the Chicago PD as likely matches on the Oath Keepers list. The Chicago officers are white, Hispanic and of Asian/Pacific heritage. One CPD member said he let his membership lapse after four or five years.

"It's not a terrorist group," he said. He joined because he felt that Chicago's ban on handguns, which the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately struck down, was unconstitutional.

NPR found at least three people whose information matched current employees of the LA County Sheriff's Department. When NPR reached one of the three officers on the phone, he said "no comment" and hung up. The other two did not respond.

A spokesperson for the Sheriff's Department stated, "The

Department was unaware of these allegations of association and will assign a supervisor to conduct an administrative inquiry. Until the conclusion of those supervisory inquiries, we are unable to comment further."

"The Sheriff's department in Los Angeles has extremist organizations within its ranks," said Max Huntsman, the County Inspector General.

Huntsman's office has posted recent reports from Loyola Law School and the RAND Corporation which found that a significant portion of Sheriff's Deputies have participated in sub-groups - often referred to as "gangs" or "cliques." Those groups have been accused of violent attacks and racial discrimination over decades.

Priscilla Ocen, the chair of the LA County Civilian Oversight Commission, agreed.

"We have a problem with white supremacy in the L.A. County Sheriff's Department," said Ocen. "We have a problem with white supremacist gangs. And the sheriff who is tasked with managing this department has looked the other way."

LAist recently reported that the head of California's Riverside County Sheriff Department, Chad Bianco, had previously joined the Oath Keepers. Bianco denounced the group's alleged role in the attack on the U.S. Capitol, but said that was unrepresentative of the Oath Keepers. "They stand for protecting the Constitution," he said.

Researchers and civil rights organizations have also noted the rise of a movement known as "constitutional sheriffs." The Anti-Defamation League said that the movement is based on the belief that "the county sheriff is the ultimate authority in the county, able to halt enforcement of any federal or state law or measure they deem unconstitutional."

An investigation by WNYC/Gothamist found at least two active members of the New York Police Department on the leaked Oath Keepers list. Mayor Bill de Blasio launched an investigation, but has allowed the NYPD to conduct its own internal review. A statement from the police department suggests little may come of it.

With nearly 18,000 state and local law enforcement agencies across the country, there is little consensus around how — or even whether — departments should address the issue of officers joining anti-government organizations.

"How do you balance an officer's freedom of speech, freedom of association with the need to maintain public trust and to ensure that they're delivering constitutional policing?" said Sue Rahr, former Sheriff of King County, Washington. "It's a difficult balance."

Nonetheless, extremism experts say law enforcement officers who take an oath only to defend the Constitution as they interpret it should be a cause for concern.

"If an individual member of Oath Keepers disagrees with a Supreme Court ruling, Oath Keepers believe that they are entitled to not comply with that Supreme Court ruling because, as Oath Keepers would say, an unjust law is no law at all," said Sam Jackson at the University at Albany. "That's really problematic to me and really, I think undercuts our understanding of the rule of law and ideas about the universal application of law."

– www.npr.org/2021/11/05

The Metaverse is Big Brother in Disguise

By John Whitehead

Welcome to the Matrix (i.e. the metaverse), where reality is virtual, freedom is only as free as one's technological overlords allow, and artificial intelligence is slowly rendering humanity unnecessary, inferior and obsolete.

Mark Zuckerberg, the CEO of Facebook, sees this digital universe—the metaverse—as the next step in our evolutionary transformation from a human-driven society to a technological one.

Yet as journalist Antonio García Martínez concludes— we're already living in the metaverse.

The metaverse is a dystopian meritocracy, where freedom is a conditional construct based on one's worthiness and compliance.

In a meritocracy, rights are privileges, afforded to those who have earned them. There can be no tolerance for independence or individuality, where political correctness is formalized, legalized and institutionalized. Likewise, there can be no true freedom when the ability to express oneself, move about,

engage in commerce and function in society is predicated on the extent to which you're willing to "fit in."

We are almost at that stage now.

Consider that in our present virtue-signaling world where fascism disguises itself as tolerance, the only way to enjoy even a semblance of freedom is by opting to voluntarily censor yourself, comply, conform and march in lockstep with whatever prevailing views dominate.

Fail to do so—by daring to espouse "dangerous" ideas or support unpopular political movements—and you will find yourself shut out of commerce, employment, and society: Facebook will ban you, Twitter will shut you down, Instagram will de-platform you, and your employer will issue ultimatums that force you to choose between your so-called freedoms and economic survival.

This is exactly how Corporate America plans to groom us for a world in which "we the people" are unthinking, unresistant, slavishly obedient automatons in bondage to a Deep State policed by computer algorithms.

Twenty-some years after the Wachowskis' iconic film, *The Matrix*, introduced us to a futuristic world in which humans exist in a computer-simulated non-reality powered by authoritarian machines—a world where the choice between existing in a denial-ridden virtual dream-state or facing up to the harsh, difficult realities of life comes down to a blue pill or a red pill—we stand at the precipice of a technologically-dominated matrix of our own making.

We are living the prequel to *The Matrix*, falling further under the spell of technologically-driven virtual communities, virtual realities and virtual conveniences managed by AI machines that are on a fast track to replacing human beings and eventually dominating every aspect of our lives.

In *The Matrix*, hacker Neo is wakened from a virtual slumber by Morpheus, a freedom fighter seeking to liberate humanity from a lifelong hibernation state imposed by hyper-advanced AI machines that rely on humans as an organic power source.

With their minds plugged into a perfectly crafted virtual reality, few humans ever realize they are living in an artificial dream world.

Neo is given a choice: to take the red pill, wake up and join the resistance, or take the blue pill, remain asleep and serve as fodder for the powers-that-be.

Most people opt for the blue pill—a one-way ticket to a life sentence in an electronic concentration camp—which has been honey-coated to hide the bitter aftertaste, sold to us in the name of expediency and delivered by way of blazingly fast Internet, cell phone signals that never drop a call, thermostats that keep us at the perfect temperature without our having to raise a finger, and entertainment that can be simultaneously streamed to our TVs, tablets and cell phones.

If ever Americans find themselves in bondage to technological tyrants, we will have only ourselves to blame for having forged the chains through our own lassitude, laziness and abject reliance on internet-connected gadgets that render us wholly irrelevant.

George Orwell understood this.

Orwell's masterpiece, *1984*, portrays a global society of total control in which people are not allowed to have thoughts that in any way disagree with the corporate state. There is no personal freedom, and advanced technology has become the driving force behind a surveillance-driven society. Snitches and cameras are everywhere. And people are subject to the Thought Police, who deal with anyone guilty of thought crimes. The government, or "Party," is headed by Big Brother, who appears on posters everywhere with the words: "Big Brother is watching you."

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People* and in its fictional counterpart *The Erik Blair Diaries*, total control over every aspect of our lives, right down to our inner thoughts, is the objective of any totalitarian regime.

The Metaverse is just Big Brother in disguise.— The Rutherford Institute Nov. 09, 2021

NJM, P.O. Box 10176, Trenton New Jersey 08650

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Back issues, from 1997 to date, can be found online. Just go to: <https://archive.org/> and in the Search Field, type in "New Jersey Militia Newsletter". Or do a google search for "New Jersey Militia Newsletter". So grab the PDFs and pass them around via email.

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____